

# Swanwick School and Sports College

Hayes Lane, Swanwick, Alfreton, DE55 1AR

**Inspection dates** 17–18 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher is an exceptional leader who, together with his senior leadership team, inspires staff with his vision and passionate drive for continual development and improvement.
- Staff have high expectations for their pupils, who achieve outstandingly well.
- Pupils of all abilities gain a wide range of external awards, including GCSEs, by the time they leave. This demonstrates their excellent learning and achievements during their time in school.
- Teachers plan work which is very well-matched to the interests and abilities of the pupils.
- The whole-school marking policy encourages pupils to reflect on their own work and help plan the next steps in their learning. Some older pupils do this well but such good practice is not consistent across the whole school.
- Behaviour is excellent across the school. Pupils greatly enjoy their lessons and their attitudes to learning are exemplary.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and enjoy excellent relationships with staff to share any concerns.
- Pupils make great strides in their personal and social development due to the exceptional care, guidance and support they receive. They are prepared extremely well for life beyond school.
- Work with other professionals to support pupils' learning and well-being in school and at home is of extremely high quality.
- Parents know they can ask for help and support at any time and feel well-informed about what their children are doing in school.
- The curriculum is innovative and offers pupils a wide choice of learning pathways to match their abilities and interests. A programme to support independent living skills is in the early stages of development and has not had sufficient time to make a full impact.
- The school leads the Amber Valley School Sports Partnership which is based within the school. As a result, all pupils gain excellent experiences and skills in their physical development.
- Governors have a secure knowledge of the work of the school and as a result make a very strong contribution to the school's improvement.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a number of lessons and part lessons. Most of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work during lessons and also reviewed samples of work books separately.
- Meetings and discussions were held with a group of pupils, individual pupils informally around school at break and lunchtimes, senior and middle leaders, teachers and support staff, the family liaison worker and positive play co-ordinator, members of the governing body and parents. An inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documentation. This included the school's own self-evaluation and development planning, data about pupils' progress and achievement, safeguarding information and behaviour logs and curriculum documents.
- Inspectors took into account the seven responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own evaluation from recent questionnaires sent out to parents and the 20 staff questionnaires returned.

## Inspection team

Lynda Morgan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Debra McCarthy

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Swanwick School and Sports College is an average-sized community day special school maintained by the local authority.
- In September 2013, a new provision known as The Hub was opened to cater for pupils with high functioning autism who are unable to sustain a mainstream placement. Currently 17 pupils are attached to The Hub; the majority access the curriculum for at least part of the week within the main part of the school.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs for a range of complex learning difficulties. The school's profile has changed significantly over the last year and now the majority have communication difficulties and autism spectrum conditions. Smaller proportions of pupils have severe learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, medical conditions, and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. Previously, the greater proportion of pupils were those with behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- Pupils are referred by the local authority and usually admitted in September each year. Some pupils are admitted at other times during the year.
- Approximately two thirds of pupils are boys. The large majority of pupils are in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Two primary classes operate, catering for pupils from Year 1 onwards.
- Few pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. The large majority are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school is in receipt of the Year 7 'catch-up' funding and the primary school physical education and sport premium.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school accesses off site provision for physical education activities within the Amber Valley School Sports Partnership.
- The school has specialist status in Sports and English and holds a number of awards including Artsmark, Youth Sports Trust Gold Partner Status and Investors in People.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the outstanding teaching by ensuring all teachers implement the whole-school marking policy in full, particularly with respect to giving pupils the opportunity to reflect on their work and identify their next steps in learning.
- Fully implementing the new programme to develop pupils' skills for independent living.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, together with the senior team, provides exceptional leadership to the school. They have high aspirations for the achievements of pupils and staff. Morale is therefore very high and the vision is shared by most. All staff have a common purpose to ensure that pupils make the best progress they can in all areas of their development.
- Teachers, middle and senior leaders collect and analyse information about pupils' progress towards their targets regularly. This ensures that any pupil who is failing to make expected progress is quickly identified and action taken to ensure they are back on track.
- The Hub is led by a teacher who is very experienced in working with pupils with autism. As a result, the classroom provides a high quality learning environment with a focus on individual programmes which challenge and extend pupils' learning and social skills.
- Leaders ensure additional funding is used highly effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. They know the difference it makes and have clear evidence of the impact. This ensures there are no gaps between the performance of disadvantaged pupils compared with other pupils.
- In its search for constant improvement, the school has worked hard to ensure teaching assistants have the skills to support the drive for outstanding teaching. As a result, they demonstrate excellent skills in supporting learning across the school.
- The performance management system is highly effective in contributing to the consistent improvement which has developed outstanding teachers. Senior leaders check on the quality of teaching through regular lesson observations, and reviews of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Teachers are set targets that are clearly linked to priorities in school development planning, pupil achievement and their own professional development. They are clear about the next steps in their own development and most value the support and professional guidance they receive.
- The school works closely with other schools, including the checking assessments of pupils' work. Leaders are working collaboratively in establishing their whole-school system for assessment without using levels.
- Support for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. The Family Liaison Worker and Positive Play Co-ordinator, who work with a wide range of multi-agency professionals, provide strong support to pupils and their families. As a result, pupils are able to access the curriculum fully; this includes enjoying success in school and on trips. The school supports pupils' skills for independent living as they begin their transition in Key Stage 4. Opportunities for pupils to gain a wider experience in this area and achieve accreditation are at the early stages of development.
- The innovative curriculum is a strength of the school. It is carefully thought out to ensure rich experiences for each pupil, regardless of their needs and abilities. Pupils are provided with a range of creative learning opportunities tailored to each individual's needs to ensure their academic and personal success and well-being. At Key Stage 4, pupils are provided with core subjects which prepare them well for their future education in college or sixth form. Additionally, they choose a pathway that matches their own particular interests from the wide range on offer. These include art, bicycle maintenance, bricklaying, painting and decorating, animal care, hair and beauty, sports and dance, and physical education.
- There are also opportunities for pupils to gain a qualification in sports leadership, the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme and art, in which pupils gain Aim awards. The strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum which form part of the core work of the school ensure all are treated equally and there is no discrimination of any kind. Pupils develop a very good understanding of modern British society and learn strong moral values through cross curricular projects, visits into the community, assembly themes and their involvement in the school council.
- Careers guidance very effectively supports older pupils to be aware of the choices they can make for their

future lives. The school works closely with further education colleges. Pupils are supported well when making their applications and with their interviews. They are accompanied on visits prior to transition and this is highly effective in supporting their confidence and well-being. Parents are always fully involved in decision making. They are very appreciative of the high quality information and support the school provides to them, especially at a time of high anxiety for both pupils and their families.

- Leaders ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met. Procedures are rigorous and staff are very well trained to identify pupils at risk of harm. In addition, high quality planning to teach and ensure pupils understand topics such as anti-bullying, cyber bullying and respect for all contribute to the high importance which is placed on safeguarding across the school by staff and pupils at all times.
- Working with Derbyshire local authority, the headteacher, his senior team and governing body have been visionary in developing the new provision known as The Hub to match the needs, abilities and aspirations of pupils within the area. Higher functioning pupils with autism referred to the school are hugely successful in their achievements and many are able to access lessons and socialise with pupils in main school for a large proportion of the time.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors make a very strong contribution to the quality of education and care. They are very responsive to suggestions for development and are involved in new projects such as the setting up of The Hub. Governors ensure that they obtain the views of parents to support improvements.
  - Governors have a very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and have recently carried out an audit of their skills to maximise their effectiveness. They provide challenge to the senior leadership team and monitor the impact of their work.
  - Governors fulfil all their statutory requirements. Together with senior leaders, they carefully evaluate the school's progress towards the targets set, making adjustments to plans as necessary.
  - Governors have a good understanding of pupil progress data and question areas seen to need attention. They use such data well to gain an accurate view of the quality of teaching. Governors ensure that teachers' pay is linked to how effectively they perform.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Attitudes to learning are exemplary and behaviour in classrooms ensures that outstanding learning can take place. Behavioural difficulties associated with pupils' special educational needs are occasional and managed exceptionally well so that they do not disrupt the learning of others.
- Pupils and staff have established strong working relationships which build self-esteem and confidence so that pupils learn to manage their own behaviour over time. The focus on providing emotional support to promote confidence enables pupils to learn to become as independent as possible within school. An emphasis on teaching pupils independent living skills supports those in Year 11 very effectively as they prepare to move onto their next steps when they leave the school. The school's work to extend this work to the younger age groups is at an early stage of development.
- Behaviour management is led extremely well and ensures a consistent whole-school approach which all staff role model. This means that pupils are clear about what is expected of them. They know the differences between right and wrong and show a pride in their school and in their own work.
- Pupils who work in The Hub learn to develop very positive attitudes to learning and over time show they are able to work alongside and together with their peers.
- Pupils show respect for their school and each other. They learn this over time and pupils are keen to support each other in this process. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as explaining about their school or showing a visitor around. In doing this they are able to explain why things are done in a particular way, for example in a physical education lesson a pupil said: 'We do it this way because it keeps everyone safe.'
- The pupil voice is very strong in the school. Pupils are consulted through the school council and their ideas

are listened to by governors who attend their meetings each term. As a result, pupils can see their ideas actioned, such as the improvements they suggested to the toilets. They are very proud of their outdoor gym equipment which is used each breaktime and are keen to show visitors how it should be used to keep fit.

- Pupils value the reward system because it helps them to know how they are doing in their work and in their personal development.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they are safe in school and on trips out; their parents agree. Pupils say they know who to go to if they have a problem and can name the staff they would turn to. They can give examples of how staff have supported and helped them.
- Pupils say there is no bullying in school but they know who to tell if it does happen. They are able to describe their work on anti-bullying and recent work on cyber bullying, and how this can make people feel. They show a mature moral code with a clear understanding of the harmful effects different forms of bullying can have on people.
- The school's policies, record-keeping and partnerships with other services and with parents are all excellent and make a strong contribution to safeguarding pupils in school and out in the community.
- Risk assessments for trips, as well as those for identified pupils, are thorough and detailed and shared with staff. Leaders regularly monitor and evaluate these and update them as necessary.
- Attendance has improved significantly as a result of the strategies put in place by the school. It is now in line with the national average for all schools. Most absences are for medical reasons. The roles of the Family Liaison Worker and Positive Play Co-ordinator has provided strong support and practical help to families, especially where pupils have experienced poor attendance prior to their transfer to the school. Their work is highly regarded by parents and the pupils themselves. A referral system is in place to prioritise further regular support for pupils to engage in the play development work and the outcomes are very positive.

### The quality of teaching

**is outstanding**

- Teaching results in the outstanding progress pupils make during their time in the school. Teachers are highly skilled in using their subject knowledge to match the wide range of learning needs and abilities of the pupils so that all can make exceptional progress.
- Teachers and their assistants challenge pupils through careful questioning to reflect and evaluate their own work in order to continually aim for improvement. Pupils are encouraged, where possible, to access resources independently and they are given time to consider answers when problem solving. For example, in a mathematics lesson pupils worked as a group to consider the problem posed by the teacher on the whiteboard. They broke it down into small steps, each contributing to the overall answer.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught extremely well across the school in all subjects, establishing and building skills which help pupils move onto higher level work in different subjects and preparing them for life outside of school. For example, pupils who were working on time compared the written word with the digital time, recognising the need to read timetables when they are travelling.
- Staff use praise highly appropriately to encourage pupils onto harder and more independent work and to build pupils' confidence in what they can achieve. Support from skilled staff for pupils' personal development builds self-esteem and makes a strong contribution to their learning. As a result, the majority of pupils are always keen to do even better with their work.
- Teaching assistants are deployed extremely effectively in lessons. They are highly skilled in encouraging independent work but also provide the excellent support necessary to ensure pupils can access the work set. They have developed their skills and knowledge within their specific subject areas as well as ensuring,

for example, the correct teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make).

- Teachers and teaching assistants establish very positive relationships with pupils and know them and their learning needs well. They have extremely high expectations of their pupils and are very enthusiastic about their subjects, which they share with pupils so that their learning experiences are exceptional. In the primary classes, pupils are encouraged to explore and develop their skills and knowledge through a wide range of practical activities and, as a result, the pupils develop a thirst for learning new things.
- Teachers and teaching assistants engage outstandingly well with parents who, in turn, feel well informed about what their children are learning and how to help them.
- Pupils working within The Hub know the expectations for their learning and behaviour are high. They respond very positively to the excellent teaching and take a pride in their work.
- The whole-school marking policy enables teachers to assess pupils' learning in order to plan the next steps effectively. It also encourages pupils to consider the next steps in their own learning through reflecting on the quality of the work they have just completed. Many are able to do this and such good practice is developing, especially in Key Stage 4. Teachers in other key stages, however, do not consistently encourage all pupils to think about what they have learnt and what they need to do next in order to improve further.

### The achievement of pupils

**is outstanding**

- Almost all pupils start at the school with attainment that is below expected levels. For most, it is well below due to their special educational needs. The small number of pupils who arrive with attainment close to expected levels and work in The Hub have typically experienced long periods of absence at the point of referral; they present with gaps in their learning and a negative attitudes towards school.
- Pupils quickly settle into school and make rapid progress in all areas of their learning. Their prior learning is accurately assessed on arrival, and their individual learning needs are identified and extremely well met. As a result, pupils gain firm foundations in reading, writing and mathematics that enable them to make rapid progress. For example, in a primary literacy lesson pupils were able to draw on prior learning of the story of *Hansel and Gretel* to describe from the pictures presented by the teacher how the main characters were feeling within the different contexts. They made rapid progress with their speaking and listening skills through the interaction with each other and the staff.
- The school's data and pupils' work in their books shows that the early improvements pupils make when they first join the school are sustained and built upon so that their progress over time is outstanding. By the time they move into Key Stage 4, pupils are able to use their basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics in real-life situations, such as when working out in science the impact of carbon monoxide within the home or when cooking on a barbecue during a camping trip.
- The most-able pupils are entered for GCSE in English, science and maths with positive outcomes achieved showing that outstanding progress is made from low starting points. All pupils gain external awards that reflect their individual abilities and interests. These include 30 separate Aim awards, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and Transition Challenges courses as well as Entry Level physical education, religious education, computing, geography, history science and childcare. These are linked to their individual learning pathways which lead to their next steps in transition to college.
- The staff team work with pupils based on their individual abilities and needs to ensure that all pupils, including those with the most significant learning needs, can access learning in different situations. Communication skills are very well developed, as are social skills, enabling pupils to work with others both in school and during trips off site. The staff work hard to promote pupils' progress towards leading independent lives in the future and aim to develop this area within the Key Stage 4 curriculum.
- All groups of pupils achieve outstandingly well. Disadvantaged pupils achieve at least as well and often better than other pupils in the school and nationally because additional funding has been directed very

effectively to ensure there are no gaps in their learning compared to other pupils. Similarly, the smaller number of minority ethnic pupils, the smaller number of girls and all groups of pupils with special educational needs achieve outstanding progress from their starting points. The school ensures equal opportunities for all to succeed by providing a curriculum very well matched to their differing needs.

- Pupils' personal development is exceptional as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The rich curriculum and well-targeted support provide many opportunities within school and in preparation for the wider community for pupils to grow in confidence and become articulate and mature young people who are ready to take the next steps in learning.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113033
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	449441

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	79
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Flora Joyce
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Greenhough
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 June 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01773 602198
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